

MINUTES

COTC BOARD OF TRUSTEES

March 26, 2020

3:00 p.m.

Emergency Board Meeting – Skype Meeting

Roll Call

Present from Fiduciary Board: Mr. Steven Cohen, , Mr. Bruce Hawkins, Mr. Robert Montagnese, Mr. J. Park Shai, Ms. Cheryl Snyder Ms. Marion Sutton, Mr. Paul Thompson, Ms. Sarah Wallace, Board Emeritus

Absent: Mr. Andy Crawford and Mr. Gordy Yance

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mr. Rob Montagnese called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and informed the board that notice of this meeting has been given in conformity with Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Berry outlined some of the initial planning related to an emergency management design. Dr. Berry declared a state of emergency for the college on Monday, March 23, 2020, which is in accordance with our policy guidelines. This was done in response to what was happening with our partner OSU. Because we have so many cost-shared employees, we wanted to remain as much in sync with OSU as possible.

Jackie reported that our initial intent was to ask the board to approve a Pandemic Leave resolution that would allow the college to have the same flexibility that OSU has to award Disaster Leave. Additionally, the resolution would give us the flexibility to supersede, suspend or change any other college policy for employees who no longer have work to do remotely. Eligibility would be determined on a week to week basis. However, the AG's guidance indicated there is nothing in the ORC or applicable administrative provisions that authorizes the college to approve or implement disaster leave pay. Employees that receive pay must work. Given the guidance that we have received from the AG's office, we are no longer recommending approval of the resolution previously shared with the board. However, we feel it is important to have discussions today.

We currently have about five COTC employees that have limited work at this time. Supervisors are trying to be creative to find work for these employees.

Dr. Berry indicated that our task is to identify these individuals as they run out of virtual work. We have been passing along innovative ideas and asked their supervisors to be creative. We may need to start looking at possible furloughs or moving people out of their roles if this state of emergency lasts for a long period of time.

There was concern about the long-term impact if employees leave and the risk of not coming up with a strategy. Dr. Berry reported that it could be difficult to keep the institution whole if we must consider making cuts down the road. On an OACC conference call yesterday, it was shared that we should be expecting less State Share of Instruction (SSI) yet this year.

It was suggested that we encourage staff and faculty to do online professional development and/or training during this time. Faculty are currently teaching but we have shared and will continue to share with our staff about online training available.

The board discussed being compliant with the state of Ohio staying home order, the guidance from the AG's office to our office as well as our sister schools, the risk of challenging this guidance and the liability going against the advice of counsel.

We have not had any conversations with our local legislators, but the AG's office indicated this is something they will address. We are in daily conversations with OSU Columbus but not receiving much guidance beyond what has previously been shared.

There are more OSU paid employees on campus than COTC that would be unable to perform work from home. We are simply trying to balance our fiscal responsibility and keep people employed if we can, but we anticipate making some tough decisions in the coming weeks. If there is a break in services, are the benefits an issue? Jackie has asked her staff to investigate possibly doing temporary furloughs and what this would mean.

We are looking at creative ways to keep our employees working if we can. Rob mentioned that the hospital has a need for additional specific staff during this crisis. There may be other organizations in our community in the same position that are operating at a very significant level in need of additional temporary support staff with the understanding the employee would come back to the college when we need them back. Skilled trade staff might be helpful.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

The first week providing classes and working remotely have gone very well with very limited issues. Our IT infrastructure has held. We have provided support for our students (computer labs) on each of our four campuses. Coshocton has utilized it the most (limited broadband). The OCIO has fit one of our parking lots as a Wi-Fi hotspot and we will market this to our students.

Our Academic Affairs department is making plans for summer. If we can get back on campus for summer, we will offer a reduced session (12 weeks). If virtual, we may look at even an 8- or 10-week semester.

David continues to look at the budget (worst, middle and best options).

Work continues on the Alford building and moving ahead with Pataskala. We may be able to move out sooner than originally planned (Pataskala) and get started sooner.

The board expressed appreciation to John, Jackie and others for all their hard work.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 21, 8:30 a.m., Skype or Zoom Meeting

The meeting adjourned at 3:39 p.m.

Rob Montagnese
Chairman

Steve Cohen
Vice-Chairman